

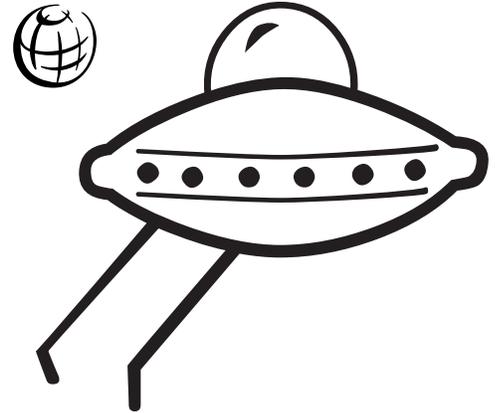


Children are captivated and curious about the world around them. They are naturally interested in exploring, observing and investigating. Children learn about science by asking questions and making discoveries about what they observe.

By encouraging their sense of wonder, we help children become scientific thinkers.

Books Your Child Will Enjoy

- Freight Train by Donald Crews
- The Snow Day by Ezra Jack Keats
- In the Small Small Pond by Denise Fleming
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
- What the Sun Sees, What the Moon Sees by Nancy Tafuri



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Discovering the World Around Us

Children are very interested in the world around us and why things change. Engage your child in conversations about the events we observe everyday.

Science 6.1

I wonder...

- Talk about the sun – how it rises in the morning, moves across the sky and disappears at night
- Observe the moon and how its shape changes from night-to-night
- Gaze at the stars and encourage your child to ask questions and wonder, “How many stars are in the sky? How far away are the stars?”
- Make a snowball in the winter and then bring it inside. Place it in the sink and watch it melt over time. “What happened? Why did it melt? How could we stop it from melting?”
- Place a plastic measuring cup outside to measure the rainfall



- Go outdoors to find insects. Talk about their names, how they build their homes and what they eat for food. Dig in the mud and look for worms.



Weather

Talk about the weather each day. Ask your child to check the weather outside and describe it to you. Ask, “What should we wear today? Do we need to wear a sweater, a coat, a hat and mittens? If it is raining, what do we need to bring with us?”



Seasons

Discuss the changes in the seasons. When winter is ending, notice that birds begin to reappear, the grass begins to turn green and flowers begin to bloom. When summer arrives, talk about the different clothes we get to wear and the different activities that remind us of summer – going to the beach and the park. When summer ends, point out the leaves on the trees and how they change colors and begin to fall.

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Plants, Fruits and Vegetables

Children act as scientists when they learn about living things. Think about ways to talk to your child about how plants are living things that need sun and water to grow. Caring for plants at home is a wonderful place to start.

Start a Small Garden

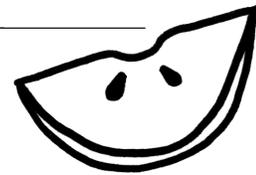
- Decide where to plant your seeds: the yard, a flowerpot or a plastic container
- Determine what plants grow best in your area
- Make a list of what you will need: seeds, dirt, a spoon or some other tool to plant
- Plant the seeds with your child. Count the seeds and measure how far apart to plant.
- Decide when you will water the soil
- Ask questions along the way:
 - “How do the plants or flowers get food?”
 - What do plants and animals need to grow?
 - What will happen to the seeds we plant?
 - What would happen if we did not feed the plants?”



RI* Family Favorite

APPLE TASTING

Next time you are at the supermarket purchase a few different types of apples. Choose different colors: one red, yellow and green. Cut a slice from each apple and have your child taste each slice. Ask your child to describe the different tastes and choose a favorite. Cut another slice and keep them out on the counter for a while. Watch what happens to the color of the inside of the apple when you leave it out.

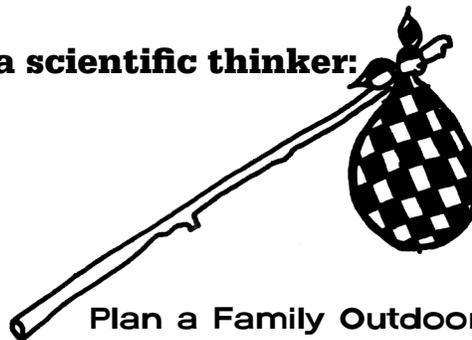


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Help your child become a scientific thinker:

- observe
- collect
- describe
- record



A Shadow Hunt

On a sunny day, take your child outside and look for shadows. Have your child find their own shadow. Move around and watch your shadows change. Try standing in your shadow. Then, stand in the light. Ask your child to describe what happens.

Now, look for as many shadows as possible. Observe the shadows made by birds, trees, signs, people, animals and flowers. Ask your child questions such as, “What has a shadow? When do you see it?”



Plan a Family Outdoor Scavenger Hunt*

1. **Develop** a list of items that you want each team to gather: seed pod, a white rock, a feather, something red, a leaf, a twig, a wild flower.
2. **Give** each team their own list of items and a bag large enough to hold the items.
3. **Set boundaries** and a time when everyone should return. At the end of the hunt, have everyone empty their bags and compare what they found.
4. **Help** your child create a list or draw pictures of the contents of the bag.

*This game works best when you work in teams.

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★ Use the back of this card to write or draw your list of items for the scavenger hunt... ➡

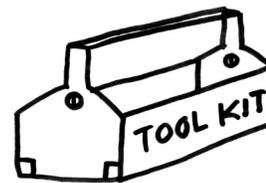
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Simple, Fun Experiments for You and Your Child

Tools for Your Scientist

Here are some items you can put together to create a tool box for your young scientist:

- measuring cups and spoons
- magnifying glass
- tweezers
- eyedroppers
- sponges
- straws
- food coloring
- scale



Changing Colors

Set out a bowl of warm water. Let your child experiment by dropping a little food coloring into the water. Add a few drops of the different colors.

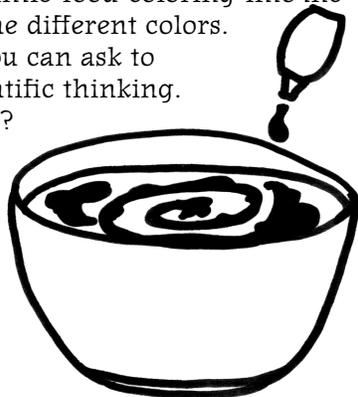
Think of all the questions you can ask to encourage your child's scientific thinking.

“What happens to the water?”

What colors can you make?

What combinations of colors make new colors?

What happens if we use a straw to blow bubbles in the bowl?”



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Ice Sculptures*

1. **Gather** together a variety of food storage containers and milk cartons in different shapes and sizes.
2. **Fill** your containers and ice cube trays with water. For a real creation, add a few drops of food coloring to each container.
3. **Place** all the containers in the freezer.
4. Once they freeze, **empty** the containers and put gloves on your child. Have fun creating ice sculptures.
5. **Sprinkle** kosher salt on the ice cubes so they will stick together.

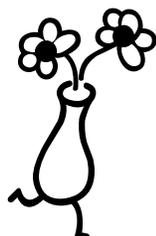
*On hot summer days, it's fun to make your creations in a small pool.

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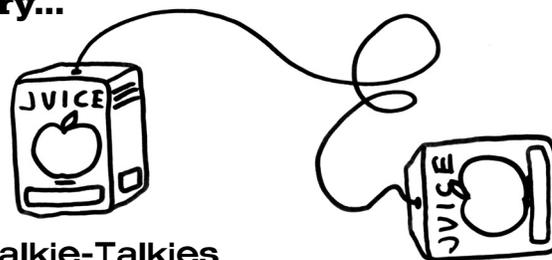
More Experiments For You to Try...

How Flowers Drink

Place a white carnation or daisy in a vase or container that has about a cup of water on the bottom. Mix 10-20 drops of food coloring into the water. Red and blue food coloring works best. Ask your child to describe the color of the flower when you first put it in the water. Leave the flower in the colored water overnight. Watch and observe as your flower changes color. The longer you keep it in the water, the darker it becomes. Ask your child to look closely at the flower to see how the colored water travels from the bottom of the vase to the tip of the petal.



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Walkie-Talkies

1. **Make** walkie-talkies with two juice boxes and a 10-15 foot piece of string.
2. **Cut** the bottom out of both juice boxes, rinse them out and let them dry.
3. **Poke** a small hole in the top of each box. Thread one end of the string through the hole and tie a knot so it is secure. Tie the other end of the string to the inside of the other box in the same way.
4. Have your child **hold** one walkie-talkie at one end of the room while you stand on the other. Ask your child to send you a message by talking softly through the bottom of the box and then to listen by placing the bottom of the box over one ear. Now you send a message.

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